

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing, re-examination and reconsideration of the subject matter identified in caption, as amended, pursuant to and consistent with 37 C.F.R. § 1.111, and in light of the remarks which follow, are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 26 have been amended to further define the "silane polysulfide." These amendments are supported by the specification, at least at page 11, line 28 to page 12, line 7. Further, claim 24 has been amended to change its dependency to claim 1. Claims 2-6 and 8-10 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 7 and 11 were previously canceled.

Upon entry of the Amendment, claims 1 and 12-26 will be all the claims pending in the application.

I. Response to Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-6, 8-10 and 12-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over French Patent No. 0001012 to Penot, which is the equivalent of U.S. Patent No. 6,951,897, in view of Japanese Patent Document No. 7-102115 to Nakajima.

Applicant respectfully submit that the present claims are patentable over the cited references for at least the following reasons.

The present claims relate to a tire belt which comprises an elastomeric composition based on:

- an isoprene elastomer,
- a reinforcing inorganic filler, and

- a specific silane coupling agent selected from the group consisting of bis-monoalkoxydimethylsilylpropyl polysulfides of formulae (II), (III), (IV), and mixtures of these polysulfides.

As the data in Table 2 of the present specification show, the presently claimed specific elastomeric composition provides an unexpected increase in the resistance to fatigue and cracking, compared to the conventional elastomeric compositions using TESPT.

Penot discloses a rubber composition comprising a diene elastomer, a reinforcing inorganic filler and a coupling system, wherein the coupling system comprises the combination of a polysulfurized alkoxy silane (PSAS) with an aldimine (R-CH=N-R) and a guanidine derivative.

The PSAS of formula (I) described in Penot is generic and encompasses a huge number of possible silanes (col. 10, line 10). As the Examiner concedes, Penot describes "a wide number of possible combinations." Further, Penot prefers using the conventional silanes bearing 3 OR groups per Si atom, more specifically, TESP or TESPT as coupling agent (col. 10, lines 51-67). In addition, only TESPT is used in Examples of Penot (Tables 1, 3, 5, 7, 11 and 13).

However, Penot, alone or in combination with Nakajima, do not describe or fairly suggest the presently claimed tire belt or the unexpected results which can be achieved therefrom.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the present claims are not obvious over Penot in view of Nakajima, and thus the rejection should be withdrawn.

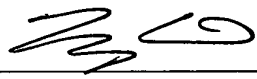
II. Conclusion

From the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is believed to be next in order and such action is earnestly solicited. If there are any questions concerning this paper or the application in general, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (202) 452-7932 at his earliest convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: January 7, 2008

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